

Application No. 10/716,899
Response to Office Action

Customer No. 01933

R E M A R K S

The Examiner is thanked for conducting a telephone interview with the undersigned on October 20, 2005, to discuss proposed amendments to claim 1.

Reconsideration of this application, as amended in light of the telephone interview conducted on October 20, 2005, is respectfully requested.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

The Examiner's indication of the allowability of the subject matter of claims 13 and 14 is respectfully acknowledged.

Claims 13 and 14 have been amended to be rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of their parent claim 1, as well as to make some minor grammatical improvements and to correct some minor antecedent basis problems so as to put them in better form for issuance in a U.S. patent.

No new matter has been added, and no new issues with respect to patentability have been raised.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that amended independent claims 13 and 14 are in condition for immediate allowance.

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THE SPECIFICATION

The specification has been amended to correct some minor informalities of which the undersigned has become aware, including the informalities pointed out by the Examiner.

No new matter has been added, and it is respectfully requested that the amendments to the specification be approved and entered, and that the objection to the specification be withdrawn.

THE CLAIMS

Independent claim 1 has been amended as discussed in the telephone interview to clarify the features of the present invention whereby a plurality of individual wiping members are provided, each of which is individually selectable to wipe the nozzle face independently, and at least one of which is formed to apply a different wiping force to the nozzle face than another of the wiping members. In addition, claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the wiping member selecting mechanism selects one of the individual wiping members, and that the wiping mechanism wipes the nozzle face with the selected individual wiping member. See, for example, Fig. 2 and the disclosure in the specification at, for example, page 15, line 17 to page 16, line 7.

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Still further, claim 1 has also been amended to correct some informalities of which the undersigned has become aware, so as to put claim 1 in better U.S. form. The informality pointed out by the Examiner has been corrected.

Claims 2, 3, 5-7, 10-17, 19 and 20, moreover, have been amended to better accord with amended independent claim 1 and/or to make some minor grammatical improvements and to correct some minor antecedent basis problems so as to also put them in better form for issuance in a U.S. patent.

No new matter has been added, and it is respectfully requested that the amendments to the claims be approved and entered.

THE PRIOR ART REJECTION

Claims 1, 7, 8, 12 and 15 were rejected under 35 USC 102 as being anticipated by USP 6,631,974 ("Shindo"); claim 9 was rejected under 35 USC 103 as being obvious in view of Shindo; and claims 2, 3, 5, 6, 10, 11, 16, 17, 19 and 20 were rejected under 35 USC 103 as being obvious in view of the combination of Shindo and USP 5,534,897 ("Anderson et al"). These rejections, however, are respectfully traversed with respect to the claims as amended hereinabove.

According to the present invention as recited in amended independent claim 1, a plurality of individual wiping members are

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provided, each of which is individually selectable to wipe the nozzle face independently, and at least one of which is formed to apply a different wiping force to the nozzle face than another of the wiping members. In addition, according to the present invention as recited in amended independent claim 1 the wiping member selecting mechanism selects one of the individual wiping members, and the wiping mechanism wipes the nozzle face with the selected individual wiping member.

That is, as shown in Fig. 2 of the present application, a plurality of individual wiping members 22a, 22b and 22c are provided which are individually selectable, and the wiping members 22a, 22b and 22c are formed so as to vary the wiping force applied to the nozzle face, depending upon which wiping member is selected. A selected one of the individual wiping members is used to wipe the nozzle face.

By contrast, as discussed in the telephone interview, it is respectfully pointed out that according to Shindo, one wiper is provided that includes two wiping member portions 52 and 53. To perform a regular wiping operation, only the wiping member portion 52 is brought into contact with the nozzle surface 24a (see Fig. 9C of Shindo), whereas to perform a powerful wiping operation, both wiping member portions 52 and 53 are brought into contact with the nozzle surface 24a (see Fig. 10C of Shindo).

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Thus, Shindo discloses one wiper integrally formed to include two wiping member portions 52 and 53. Wiping member portion 52 is always brought into contact with the nozzle surface 24a during a wiping operation, regardless of whether the wiping operation is "normal" or "powerful," and wiping member portion 53 is additionally brought into contact with the nozzle surface 24a when the wiping operation is switched to "powerful." Significantly, wiping member portion 53 is not individually selectable to wipe the nozzle surface 24a independently.

It is respectfully submitted, therefore, that Shindo does not disclose, teach or suggest a plurality of individual wiping members, each of which is individually selectable to wipe the nozzle face independently, in the manner of the present invention as recited in amended independent claim 1.

And it is respectfully submitted that Anderson et al also does not disclose, teach or suggest these features of the present invention as recited in amended independent claim 1.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present invention as recited in amended independent claim 1, and claims 2, 3, 5-12, 15-17, 19 and 20 depending therefrom, clearly patentably distinguishes over Shindo, taken singly or in combination with Anderson et al, under 35 USC 102 as well as under 35 USC 103.

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Entry of this Amendment, allowance of the claims and the passing of this application to issue are respectfully solicited.

If the Examiner has any comments, questions, objections or recommendations, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the telephone number given below for prompt action.

Respectfully submitted,



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